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AM-BOKASSA, 2 PARIS

LE CANARD ENCHAINE PUBLISHED WHAT IT SAID WAS A FACSIMILE OF A 1973 ORDER FROM THEN PRESIDENT JEAN-BEDEL BOKASSA ASKING FOR A GIFT OF DIAMONDS "TOTALING ABOUT 50 CARATS" FOR MR GISCARD D'ESTAING, THEN FINANCE MINISTER.

ITS FULL-PAGE ARTICLES, CARRYING THE SIGNATURE OF EDITOR CLAUDE ANGELI, SAID FRENCH PARATROOPERS AND SECRET AGENTS, SENT TO THE CENTRAL AFRICAN CAPITAL OF BANGUI AFTER THE COUP, TRANSFERRED GOVERNMENT ARCHIVES TO THE FRENCH EMBASSY TO COVER UP CONTACTS BETWEEN FRANCE AND EMPEROR BOKASSA.

"A THEFT OR A FRENCH WATERGATE. THE CHOICE HAD TO BE MADE. IF BOKASSA'S ARCHIVES HAD REMAINED IN CENTRAL AFRICAN HANDS, THERE COULD HAVE BEEN A CATASTOPHE ONE DAY," LE CANARD SAID.

LAST FRIDAY SOCIALIST LEADER FRANCOIS MITTERRAND TOLD THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY THAT FRANCE "INTERVENED HESITANTLY TO ELIMINATE COMPROMISING EVIDENCE" IN BANGUI.

"NEITHER THE GOVERNMENT NOR THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC WANT ANY TRACES LEFT BEHIND OF THOSE LONG, DARK YEARS," HE ADDED.

LE MONDE EDITOR JACQUES FAUVET CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TODAY TO SET UP AN INQUIRY "IN THE DUAL INTEREST OF EXPRESSING THE TRUTH AND OF UPHOLDING THE HONOR OF AUTHORITY."

MORE 1546

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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